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**Arkansas Arts Center Children's Theatre
Announces the 2010-11 Season**

(LITTLE ROCK, AR) – The Arkansas Arts Center Children's Theatre announces the 2010-2011 Children's Theatre Season, which runs from September 2010 through May 2011.

For 30 years, Children's Theatre has been creating exceptional theatre for family audiences. Well-loved contemporary stories and classic tales come to life with fantastic characters, brilliant lighting, colorful costumes and a little magic in fully-staged productions. The Children's Theatre was recognized as one of the best regional theatre companies in America by The Drama League in 2007.

Artistic Director Bradley Anderson and Keith Smith have been instrumental in Children's Theatre's success for the past three decades. Anderson came to the Children's Theatre in 1979 from the prestigious Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis, and

Smith became part of the acting company in 1980 after attending Harding University in Searcy, Ark.

Since the Arkansas Arts Center Children's Theatre became a professional acting company in 1979, more than 1.3 million people have attended. Throughout its 30-year history, Children's Theatre has performed more than 195 titles including its first play *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* in the fall of 1979 and most recently, *Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp* in early May 2010.

"The Children's Theatre is dedicated to producing excellent theatre that engages young minds," said Keith Smith, associate director and playwright.

"We adhere to the highest standards," said Bradley Anderson, artistic director. "One of our goals in Children's Theatre is to have a broad age appeal, so that each play is a shared experience and enjoyed by everyone, regardless of age. I believe that this goal has greatly contributed to the success of Children's Theatre from its inception to today."

The 2010-11 season opens with *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* on September 17 – October 3, 2010. This well-loved book is adapted for the stage by Timothy Mason and performed three times throughout Children's Theatre's history in 1987, 1995 and 2002. *Tom Sawyer* chronicles the adventures of Mark Twain's mischievous young hero in a small town on the Mississippi River.

"*Tom Sawyer* is a Children's Theatre favorite, and it is simply a really good play," said Anderson.

The second play of the season *The Giant and the Beanstalk* is on stage October 22 – November 7, 2010. Written by Smith, this play is a contemporary twist on the

legendary fairy tale *Jack and the Beanstalk*. In this Children's Theatre original play, the giant climbs down the twisty beanstalk to a world of smaller proportions.

“As a playwright, I have the unique opportunity to write plays and see them immediately, professionally and fully produced. I am really excited about *The Giant and the Beanstalk* because it will be an original story that I can make up from scratch,” said Smith.

For the premiere holiday production on December 3 - 19, 2010, Junie B. Jones will return to the Children's Theatre stage in *Junie B. in Jingle Bells, Batman Smells!*. Junie B. Jones first appeared on the Children's Theatre stage in the fall of 2008 in *Junie B. Jones and a Little Monkey Business*. This play is adapted by Allison Gregory from the beloved Junie B. Jones children's series by Barbara Park. Due to the popularity of this play, two performances will be held on Saturday at 1 and 3 p.m.

“Junie B. Jones is wacky and fun, and everyone loves her. It was a very easy decision to bring Junie B. back to the Children's Theatre stage for our holiday production this season,” said Anderson.

The season will continue with *The Jungle Book* on January 21 – February 6, 2011. *The Jungle Book* was first performed on the Children's Theatre stage in 1984 and again in 1992 and 2002. Based on the classic book by Rudyard Kipling, *The Jungle Book* tells the story of Mowgli, the man-cub raised by wolves. Mowgli grows and learns the law of the jungle from his bear friend Baloo and panther friend Bagheera.

“*The Jungle Book* will give Children's Theatre the opportunity to create a visually stunning and stylistic play based on Rudyard Kipling's novel,” said Anderson.

The Children's Theatre premiere *If You Give A Pig A Pancake* will be on stage March 11 – 27, 2011. This play is adapted from the well-loved children's book *If You Give A Pig A Pancake* by Laura Numeroff and follows *If You Give A Mouse A Cookie* performed in the spring of 2008 and *Merry Christmas, Mouse!* performed in December 2009. In the popular circular story, mishap turns to mayhem when Pig asks Girl for a pancake. Special spring break matinees will be held for *If You Give A Pig A Pancake* on March 23, 24 and 25 at 2 p.m.

“The next installment of Laura Numeroff's popular series *If You Give A Pig A Pancake* will be an exciting circus and theatre fusion that is sure to be just as funny as *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*,” said Anderson.

The 2010-11 Children's Theatre season will come to a close with *There's A Boy in the Girls' Bathroom* on stage April 29 – May 15, 2011. This play was first performed on the Children's Theatre stage in 2000. *There's A Boy in the Girls' Bathroom* is written by Louis Sachar, who also authored the book, and is performed by special arrangement with Susan Shulman, a literary agency. The play is about Bradley Chalkers, the oldest kid in the fifth grade. He's a bully, liar and picks fights with girls. No one likes him—except Carla, the new school counselor. With her help, Bradley learns to believe in himself in this heartwarming play about adolescence.

“*There's A Boy in the Girls' Bathroom* is a powerful play about a very troubled boy. Louis Sachar presents this classic adolescent tale in a fun and humorous way,” said Anderson.

Children's Theatre performances are held on Friday at 7 p.m., Saturday at 3 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$14 for adults and \$11 for children.

Season ticket packages are available. Season tickets offer maximum savings over single ticket prices and the ultimate flexibility. Season ticket packages include: the Family Package (four tickets to all six plays) for \$200; the Opening Night Family Package (four tickets to all six plays on opening night) for \$225; the 6-Play Package for \$60; the Opening Night Package (one ticket to all six plays on opening night) for \$66; the 4-Play Package for \$41; the 3-Play Package for \$32; the Flex Pack (36 tickets) for \$285; and the Jr. Flex Pack (18 tickets) for \$160.

Single and season tickets will go on sale June 15, 2010. To purchase tickets, visit www.arkarts.com or call 501-372-4000.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Contact: 501-372-4000

Season run: September 2010 – May 2011

Tickets: \$14 for adults, \$11 for children and \$10 for group of 10 or more

Performance Times: Fridays 7:00 p.m.; Saturdays 3:00 p.m.; Sundays 2:00 p.m.

Location: Arkansas Arts Center – 9th and Commerce, Little Rock, AR 72202

Proudly sponsored by: Fine Arts Club of Arkansas; Little Rock Family

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